

Moments in Between by lameafpun

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Summary:

Mrs. Holland is like an aunt to Nancy, or at least a mother in law, but maybe that's too much to ask for.

Moments in Between

When Barb's gone, all Nancy can think of are the moments that they had together; between school and home, childhood and almost-adulthood, and every single one feels stolen. She can remember their conversations and the hand holding that neither of them really acknowledge. The banter during sleepovers in between sleeping and wakefulness, when neither one of them really means what they say (but they do, and Nancy finds herself lying painfully awake after an innocuous "I love you" from Barb).

She wanted it to be real, to be meant in that special way she saw being shared between her mom and dad (but maybe a little different, because she could see their love fading, peeling away). She wanted to be brave like Barb was, unafraid to stand up and out if it meant staying true to herself, but maybe Jonathan had been right. Maybe she was just her parents, but when Barb looked at her she couldn't help but feel like *more*. Like something right was happening, not confusing at all since the summer they had shut themselves in the library after Barb had found something named Virago.

Fuck having a moment. Nancy had wanted forever. She had tested out how "Nancy Holland" and "Barbara Wheeler" felt on her tongue, under her breath while she was doing her biology homework. She had looked through thick, sleek magazines filled with white gowns bursting with tulle and trains that went on forever, remembering the way Barb had smiled and shone at their pretend weddings when they were kids (when her parents had thought it was cute and then softly tried to explain how "that wasn't how weddings worked"). Nancy thought a lot about lifting the veil and revealing the short, red hair underneath. Nancy had even been witness to conversations between Barb and her parents and how they were holding on to a wedding ring that had been passed down from Barb's maternal grandmother down to her mother, and was going to be given to Barb when she got married. It was silver and simple and perfect, and Nancy loved the way Barb's eyes lit up when looking at it.

Nancy wanted a forever and, like many children, she had taken the time to plan it all. She was Nancy Wheeler, her bride was Barbara

Holland, and they were going to go and live in the UK after their wedding — a small ceremony where Nancy would slide Barb's family ring over her finger and dip kiss her under an arch of white carnations.

When Barb's gone, Nancy can't help but think of the wedding and the life she had dedicated a notebook to, decorated with doodles of Barb's glasses and little hearts with the initials BH and NW written with care inside. She thinks of the moments when she had Barb, and had felt beautiful, like nothing could ever touch the happiness that sprung from her as easy as breathing. She remembers the day Barb had seen the hearts on her notebook, left on her desk because Nancy had been tired of hiding and she knew what she wanted now. And yet, the kisses and hugs were stolen, away from prying eyes that had already dubbed Barb with words like "dyke" that made Nancy want to take on the world. Barb shrugs it off and wraps Nancy in a hug, breathing out a "Nance" that is so fond it almost hurts.

When Barbara's gone, Nancy threads that silver ring through a thin chain and it hangs just above her heart.

Author's Note:

no idea what I'm doing but I was gay and sad when it wrote this and ta-da it is also gay and sad